

The Goodness of God's Law

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[0:00] Psalm 19, we'll begin reading at verse 7 and read through 14. The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.

The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold.

They are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. By them, as your servant warned, in keeping them, there is a great reward. Who can discern his errors?

Forgive my hidden faults. Keep your servant also from willful sins. May they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression.

[0:58] May the words of my heart, may the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight. O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

Eight inches of newly fallen snow lies on the driveway. And a man is clearly frustrated and throwing into the garbage can a perfectly good tablespoon that he got out of his wife's silverware drawer.

What are you doing? She says. Well, it's worthless. I've been working for two hours now, trying to shovel the drive, and you can't even tell I got started.

It's useless. Now, that's the way some people treat the law of God. They try using it as a ladder to heaven, something that was never made to be.

Trying to save themselves by obeying God's laws. But the harder they work at obeying, the more frustrated and more they realize they can't do it.

[2:09] It's impossible. They keep coming short of the mark. And finally, in their despair, they hear the gospel. How Jesus obeyed the law for his people and then died to suffer the penalty of a broken law.

And they trust in him alone to save them. And they're saved. And now they're ready to just chuck the law of God and get rid of it. I mean, this could not plow the driveway.

This could not get me to heaven. And they're ready to discard it and give it no place in their life.

Well, a spoon was never made to shovel the driveway.

And the law was never given to save sinners. And the fact that it fails to do so, that it fails to do what it never was meant to do, does not make it useless.

The spoon is just right for putting Cheerios or ice cream into your mouth. And the law of God is just right to fulfill the purposes for which God made it and gave it to us.

[3:23] The Apostle Paul tells Timothy, the law is good if a man uses it properly. So we're back to basics this morning. Back to important foundational truths of the Christian life.

And one of the most basic things is to have a right view of God's law. A right attitude toward it. And a right use of it.

So my aim this morning is to stir up us believers. To love God's law as the good thing that it is. And to be most grateful for it. And happily to obey it.

Now ever since God published his first law, gave his first law on earth, Satan has been spreading propaganda that God's laws are bad for you.

They're harsh. They're oppressive. God is keeping back something good for you in his law. And ever since mankind fell in Adam, we come into this world with a sinful heart that is programmed to believe that lie of the devil.

[4:33] That God's law is bad for us. It's against us rather than for us. And so we have a nature that will not submit to God's law. Neither indeed can it submit.

And even after God saves us and makes us new creatures and gives us a new heart, the devil doesn't quit spreading his propaganda about the law. And the world all around us is bought into his lie.

And so they're spreading his lie. And there's still a part in us, our own flesh, that tells us, the devil's right.

The law is not good for me. It's bad. And so it remains a most fundamental thing in the Christian life to stay convinced of the goodness of God's law.

To wholeheartedly believe that his commandments are truly good. They come from a good God who means to do us nothing but good by them. So I want you to hear the lawgiver himself.

[5:38] After he gave the Ten Commandments to Israel, God said in Deuteronomy 5:29, Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and to keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever.

I'll ask you, does that sound like an ogre in heaven wanting to make life miserable for his people? Oh, that there was such a heart in them to obey all my commandments always, so that it would go well with them.

You see, God's out to do us good by his commands. And there are two inspired men in Scripture who were most familiar with this law of God and had a lot to say about it.

David and the Apostle Paul. Here you have an Old Testament believer and a New Testament believer, but what they have in common is that they're both lovers of God's law. Oh, how I love your law, David says.

He says over and over, I love your law. And he'll tell us why. And by the way, if you just want a synopsis on David's love for the law, it's easy to remember.

[6:55] Psalm 19 and Psalm 119. The 19th. The 19th. And you'll find in them why David loves the law of God. And I would just challenge you to spend some time this week in those two Psalms, the 19th.

But the New Testament believer, Paul, is no less delighting in the law of God. We find him in Romans 7, 22 says that, In my inner man, I delight in God's law.

And it's the Lord Jesus himself who said that, Your law is within my heart. The perfect man found his heart throbbing with love for God's law. Now, the goodness of God's law then is seen in its various God-intended uses.

What is this spoon to be used for? What is the law of God to be used for? Consider three purposes this morning for God's law.

And by God's law, I'm speaking about his unchanging moral commandments. What is right for man from creation right through to the end of the age. Summarized in the Ten Commandments.

[8:04] Further summarized in loving God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves. Well, first of all, God's law reveals God's character.

God's law reveals God's character. There's a correspondence between what God is and what God commands. Those two are connected.

Romans 7, 12 says, The law is holy and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good. Do you know why the law is holy, righteous, and good, kids?

Because God is holy, righteous, and good. And God's law expresses who he is. He is holy, first of all.

The law is holy with a holiness higher than the standards of our own society. Why is that? Because it's a holiness that comes from the holy one, God himself.

[9:08] What does God say? You be holy because I am holy. Lord, what does it mean to be holy like you are holy? Well, let me give you ten ways that you're holy like I am holy.

And let me give you commandments. And by the commands and laws of God, we see what holiness means for us. The law is holy.

The law is righteous. Righteous. David said it in Psalm 119, 137. Righteous are you, O Lord, and your laws are right.

He's righteous. His laws are righteous. You see, God's laws are not random. They're not arbitrary rules that have no connection with anything.

No, they have direct connection to who he is. He's righteous. He's right. And so all of his laws are right. They're forever right. You never follow them for ten years and then say, Oh, these laws aren't good anymore.

[10:11] This is the right law now. Man's laws are like that. They change. But not God's. They're forever right. Psalm 119, verse 144. And they are right because God is right.

Furthermore, the law is not only holy and righteous, but it's good. And it's good with a goodness that is found in God himself. His law is good.

Now, of the three, I'll bet you that that's the one that we wrestle with more than the other two. Not whether or not God's law is holy or righteous, but we wonder sometimes if it's really good. In fact, every time we break one of God's laws, at least for the moment, we are saying we don't think it's good.

We think that our way is better. At least right now, that's what we're thinking. And we show that by what we're doing. We believe we found a better way.

Oh, but every commandment of God is good. Just as he commanded in six days and then pronounced it's very good. So when God gave his law, he says it's very good because he is good.

[11:20] And he only does what is good. And he only commands what is good. Isn't it good that God doesn't want people stealing my stuff? My wife.

My life. The eighth, seventh and sixth command. Isn't that good? What would the world be like if there was nothing wrong with that?

But it's not only good that others don't do that to me. It's good that I don't take your stuff and your wife and your life. That's good for me, too.

You see, God has thought about the best way for John to live and he's written it down in his commandments. It's good for us to live this way. The law is holy, righteous, and good.

And so we don't receive it correctly unless we trust in the goodness of God in it. We must be convinced God is good when he gives us his commandments.

[12:23] So the law reveals the lawgiver. His moral character is seen in his law.

We're blessed to have such laws. Holy, righteous, and good. Now, second thing. The second thing the law does is that God's law reveals our sin.

Our sin. Our sin. God's holy character. And now our sin. Ouch.

That first look in the mirror in the morning can be painful, can't it? Ouch. Do I really look that bad?

But it's good for me to look in that mirror, isn't it?

It's good for me to see just what a bad hair day I'm having. Or the remnants of breakfast that I'm still wearing. It's good that I see that.

[13:23] That I am exposed to that. That I might do something about it. The mirror shows me what needs cleaning up. But it has no power to clean me.

None whatsoever. A mirror was never made to clean you. Don't try using it for that purpose. Rather, it sends you to the soap.

And to the water. And the wash rag. And the brush. And the toothbrush. God's law is the mirror of his own holiness. So what do I see when I look into this mirror?

I see how far short I continually come from that standard of God's holiness. When I look at you and others, I might say I'm doing pretty well.

But when I look in this mirror of God's law, I see I've sinned. I see how wicked I am. How unlike God I am. And you know the mirror does not lie, does it?

[14:26] It does not flatter me. It just shows me what I am. And that's the way God's law is. It shows me precisely what I am. Nothing more, nothing less.

And it wakes me up from my fatal delusion that I'm good enough for God. It condemns me and curses me for not obeying all of his commandments.

All the time. Galatians 3.10 Outside of Christ, the law has one thing to say to me. Guilty. Damned. Cursed. But it has no power to save me or cleanse me. It's not a ladder to heaven.

It's a mirror to show me God's holiness, my sinfulness. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature. God did by sending his own son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering.

[15:31] Romans 8.3 Later on in that, in Romans 3.20, Paul says, No one will be declared righteous in God's sight by observing the law.

Nobody's ladder makes it to heaven. Rather, through the law, we become conscious of sin. That's the point of the law. It makes us aware.

It gives us the knowledge of our sin. It shows me just how lost and hopelessly condemned I am. But it doesn't leave me there. It shows me that and then it chases me to Jesus.

The only Savior for lawbreakers. The only way that I can get to heaven. The only true ladder that reaches and satisfies all the righteous requirements of God.

Galatians 3.24 says that the law was our schoolmaster that was put in charge to lead us to Christ. That we might be justified by faith in Him, not by our own works of the law.

[16 : 36] And so, the Apostle Paul gives us his testimony. Several of his letters. And before his conversion, Paul was a Pharisee. He would have regarded himself as an expert in law keeping.

He was good at it. Just ask him. And he would have told you, as he does in Philippians 3.6, As to the righteousness of the law, I was faultless.

I had attained to that level. But the problem was that as Paul was looking into the mirror, the lights weren't on.

Of course he looked good. He was standing in the dark as he read the law of God. And then the Holy Spirit of God came and enlightened his mind and turned on the lights.

And suddenly, Paul saw what he really looked like. Oh, wretched man that I am! I haven't got to first base yet in the Ten Commandments.

[17 : 40] And he testifies to us of what he saw when he looked at the law. He says in Romans 7.7, I would not have known what sin was except through the law.

For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, Do not covet. And when I saw what the law required, was not just some outward performance.

Staying out of my neighbor's house and in his bedroom and keeping my knife out of my neighbor's back and not spitting or cursing my mom or my dad, but it actually demands that my heart not want something that's not lawfully mine.

And I could no more control the covetous nature of my heart than I could make myself fly. Paul says, I am ruined.

I can't measure up to this standard. It drove him to despair.

[18 : 53] And that is precisely why God uses his law. In this second use. To drive people to despair of their own law keeping. So that Paul sees, I can never get to heaven on my own law keeping.

Made him start looking outside of himself. And he's pointed even to the Lord Jesus. The perfect law keeper. Who died in the place of law breakers.

The law couldn't save him, but it sent him running to the one who could. Foul I to the fountain fly. Wash me, Savior, or I die. And that was Paul.

Flying to Christ. Trusting in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. To cleanse him from all sin. To wash him whiter than snow.

I wonder. Are you looking regularly into God's mirror? The law. Have you seen yourself recently? Have you really had a good look?

[19 : 57] At what you are? Not just to your wife and your children, your parents, but to God. Have you looked lately? Have you seen your sin?

And has it driven you to Christ afresh? Do you see just how much you need him? Do you see why you must continually be cleansed by his blood? If you're ever to walk in the light as he is in the light. And enjoy fellowship with him. The law of God. Apart from that work of the law, we would be content to trust in our own imaginary righteousness.

It's the law that makes us to despair. Of our own law keeping. And strips us of that fatal lie that we're good enough for God.

We're better than so and so. And it's only when we've come to the point of despairing in ourselves that we get desperate for mercy in Jesus Christ. The law chasing us off of every false hope.

[21 : 01] Chasing us into the arms of Jesus. The only perfect law keeper. You see the kindness of God in that. In giving us his law to reveal our sin.

Many of you have had that experience. Of the Holy Spirit. Using the commandments. The law of God. And jabbing your heart till it ached. Until you saw, I can't measure up.

And so you look to Christ. Who saves lawbreakers. And you trusted in him. That was a painful experience, wasn't it?

But better now than later. You know, that's an experience that all men are going to have one day. At the throne of judgment. All men are going to be exposed.

And see themselves perfectly in the mirror of God's righteous laws. But it will be too late to repent and believe. Wasn't it kind of God to bring his law and shove it into your face and say, Take a look at yourself.

[22:08] That you might flee to him. To Christ. To save you before it's too late. The goodness of God. In using his law to reveal our sin.

That's why in the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom. You find Jesus forever using the law of God. Why is he doing that? Doesn't he know that hurts? When he tells us that murder is not just stabbing my neighbor in the heart.

But it's when I'm angry at him without cause. Oh, I find myself doing that. And it's sinful when I don't love my enemy.

Oh. When I don't go the second mile. Oh. When I want to get even. Oh. And I start to see myself. Why is Jesus forever using the law in his preaching of the gospel?

Because nothing else will make us let go of our own law keeping for righteousness. Nothing will ever make us get desperate that Jesus only is my hope and my trust. What a good God to give us his law.

[23:17] Reveals God's character. My sin. And thirdly, it reveals the Christian's rule of life. So the law sends me running to Christ for life.

And then Christ takes me back to the law. Now is my friend. And gives it to me. And says, this is the way to love me.

To please me. To glorify me. Here it is. My law. You see, the law is no impersonal law code. It's not something detached in some way from the law giver.

No, it's an expression of the law giver. It's the will of the one who gave his life for me. How can I love you now, Lord Jesus, who obeyed for me and who died for me?

And he says, well, if you love me, keep my commandments. Here's ten of them. Ten ways to love me. Oh. That's good.

[24:18] The law instructs us in our duties. Our obligations. Our responsibilities in life. This is what we owe God. Because he is God. And we are his creatures.

You see, Jesus' work of salvation frees us from the law's condemnation and curse. But not from the law's authority in our lives.

He distinctly warns any in Matthew 5 who claim that the law is abolished in Christ. Yes, he fulfilled the law for me down to its every jot and tittle.

But in doing so, he has left us an example that we should follow in his steps. And don't say that you know him unless you live like Jesus did.

John tells us. So the very purpose of his saving work was to deliver us from going our lawless way and to redeem us so that we will walk in his holy way defined by his commandments.

[25:19] Christ's gracious salvation does not lessen our obligation to keep God's law. Rather, it gives us additional reasons and now power to keep that law.

Do you know what Jesus won for you, dear Christian, by his perfect obedience unto death? He won for you the Holy Spirit. And he gave him to you.

To do what? To work in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. To keep his laws. For what the law was powerless to do and that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering.

And so he condemned sin in sinful man. In order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us. Who walk not by the flesh but by the spirit.

Why did Christ save us? That by the power of the Holy Spirit those righteous requirements might be met in us. As we walk not by our sinful nature but by the power of the spirit.

[26:35] Romans 8 chapter 4. So there's a whole new dynamic and power for law keeping in the Christian's life that was never there before. What is it? No, it's who is it?

It is the Holy Spirit of God taking up residence in our hearts. And what does he do when he comes into our heart? He writes his law in our hearts so that we desire to keep it. And he works in us and enables us to keep that law.

Ezekiel 36, 27. God says in the new covenant, I will put my spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees. And move you to be careful to keep my laws.

Have you thought through that in this whole issue of the law of God? That the very reason the Holy Spirit of God lives in you is to move you to be careful to keep God's laws.

The spirit filled life does not replace God's laws. Well, I have the spirit don't need the law. No, the spirit comes to move me to keep those commandments. That he's given me.

[27:45] Would you notice then that careful keeping of God's law is not legalism? Careful keeping of God's law is not legalism.

Some think that you avoid legalism by just not being too careful about keeping God's commands. No. Careful keeping of the Lord's day is not legalism.

Men and women, are you careful to not commit adultery? Anyone here careful to not commit adultery? Is that legalism? Children, are you careful to obey your mom and dad and honor them? Is that legalism? No. Well, neither is it legalism to be careful to keep all the rest of God's commands. If God's commands are to be kept at all, they're to be carefully kept.

If careful obedience is legalism, then the Holy Spirit is a legalist. Because he moves us to be careful to keep God's commands. If careful obedience is legalism, then Jesus Christ is a legalist.

[28:56] Because he was very careful to keep God's commands. Perfectly so. He says, I love the Father and I do exactly what my Father has commanded me to do.

Sometimes I wonder if these people would like us to... What's the proper thing to do in their eyes? Is it to give an uncaredful obedience to God's law?

To give a casual, lax obedience? Is it to sit loose toward commandments? But to even ask the question is to see the folly of such a position.

And yet many think that to be carefully keeping God's commands is legalism. Don't be a legalist about that. Well, careful obedience is not legalism.

It's Christ-likeness. It's spirit-filled living. It's what God requires. No, legalism seeks to earn salvation by careful obedience.

[30:00] If you're trying to be so careful as to earn your way to heaven, that's legalism. If you add 1,500 other laws besides God's laws, and you add and you put those equal with God's laws to please God, then that's legalism.

But just careful obedience is Christ-like. So let's consider then the law as the rule of life. Some have called it the third use of the law. It teaches us how to live.

And the first thing I want us to see under this point is that God's law guides us. God's law guides us. Psalm 119, 105, Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

So we're in the woods at night, kids, and the leaves are not letting any of the sunlight come or the moonlight come through. We can barely see our hand in front of our faces.

And all around us are life-threatening dangers. Traps, pitfalls, snares, and cliffs. We could easily get lost.

[31:04] And then someone hands us a flashlight. Says, here, use this. What do you do with that light? You throw it away? Or do you cherish it and use it to make your way through the dark woods at night?

Many are throwing away the flashlight. Don't want it. Don't need it. Now that's precisely our condition as we make our way through this dark night of sin and temptation.

There are devils setting deceitful traps all around us. The world has its allurements to pull us off the right path, to get us off the narrow road and over onto the broad road that leads to destruction.

And our own flesh can easily deceive us. I can't trust the flesh. There's a way that seems right to a man. But that way that seems right to me ends in destruction. So I'm in the dark and I'm needing a light to show me the way.

And His law. His law. His commandments. His truth. His word. It becomes that light for our path.

[32:14] The psalmist said it in the passage we read in Psalm 19.8. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. So we've got light now. We've got God's law. We've got a flashlight.

And His commands say to us, well, this is the way. Walk in it. Do not do this.

Do do this. You shall not. You shall. And so, it's pointing out to us the way to make our way through the dark world of sin. You see, that's the law of God.

The commandments are pointing the way. It's the light shining on the path where you need to put your next step. Make sure you don't step there.

But step here. The light. Lamp. Lighting the way. So Christian, love the flashlight. Cherish the flashlight. Use the flashlight that God's given to guide you safely home to heaven.

[33:14] It's a perfect guidance system. It's just what we need in making decisions on life. The all-sufficient tool that the Holy Spirit uses to lead us is the law of the Lord.

I mean, think about it. We have one chance to live, don't we? So, one long walk through the dark woods. That's all we get in life. And it's game over. It's done.

So, without the light of God's law, you would be left to trial and error to your own instincts, wouldn't you? At the mercy of devils, and there'd be a whole lot of error and missteps and wrong steps and falls and destruction and ruinous consequences that would cripple your life and would harm you and leave you at the end with eternal regrets.

And by then, you may have learned a little bit about how to make it through life, how to get through this dark woods. But it's over. You can't go back and take the walk again. But suppose that at the outset of the journey, the Lord hands you the light and says, here, I don't want you to end up at the end of life with nothing but regrets.

Here, here's the way to live. Here's my law. This will get you safely through this dark night of sin. Think what he puts in our hand when he gives us his commands.

[34 : 47] The wisest mind, the mind that knows everything, the end from the beginning. He's looking at it all and he's thinking, what is the very best way for man to live in that world?

And he writes it down in his laws and commands. And he gives it to us. This is the very best way to make your way through life.

Isaiah 48, 17 and 18, this is what the Lord says, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the Lord, your God, who teaches you what is best for you.

What is best for you. That four-letter word, what is best for you. Not just a good way, but what is best for you. Who directs you in the way you should go if only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

Your peace and righteousness would have just rolled on and on like the waves of the sea. If only you'd have followed the best way that I gave you in my commands.

[35 : 57] So there's a four-year-old and she really thinks that cookies and candy would make for the best diet and that no bedtime would be the best way to live.

And she really thinks so. She's dead determined that this would be good for me. And she may even cry when daddy disagrees with her. But mom and dad know otherwise.

And they think otherwise. So who knows best the right way to live? Well, there used to be a sitcom. Didn't there? Father knows best.

And it would demonstrate that very fact over and over again. Father knows best. Knows better than the four-year-old. Can you imagine that? He knows better than her. What is best? That's the issue with regard to God's commands.

Who knows best? Who knows the very best way to live this life of 80 years or whatever you've got? Who knows the best way to live this day if we had none other?

[37 : 04] Well, God says I do. I thought it all out with infinite wisdom. I've written it down. Here are my commands. Live this way. You see, the disobedience to God's commands is not only rebellion.

It's arrogant unbelief. It's thinking we know better than God what is best for me. And that is far more arrogant than the four-year-old telling Daddy, I know better than you what the best diet and bedtimes are.

This is infinite God speaking to pea-brained me and saying, John, I've thought about this issue. I've given it some thought.

This is the best way to live. What does it remain but for me to say, Father, I don't even know why you thought of me. Why you would be so kind even to tell me that.

Why you wouldn't just leave me to myself. I turned my back on your way long ago and that you would come and show me the best way. Oh, I love you, Father, for that. Thank you for your loss.

[38 : 07] Would you help me to stick to these ways? Father knows best. And so the law of God is a guide to us.

It guides us. Secondly, the law warns us. The law warns us. Psalm 19, verse 11. By them, by your commandments, is your servant warned.

So the commandments are God's warning system. When the earthquake hit offshore of Japan, immediately in some of the cities affected, tsunami warnings were immediately given, telling them that they had just a few minutes to make for high ground and to save their lives.

They were screeching sirens. Did you hear them? Screeching sirens. Now, who complains about the tsunami warning? You know that sound. It's so disturbing.

It makes me nervous. I don't like that. The pitch is wrong. Does anyone do that? When the tornado warning is given, oh, it's a blaring thing. It sure gets me upset.

[39:17] No, we're thankful for the warning, aren't we? We're very thankful to be warned of the disaster that's coming. And all God's commands are like tsunami warnings or tornado warnings.

Every single command has some harm, some danger that it's warning you to flee. By them is your servant warned.

They warn of ways of wickedness, displeasing to the Lord. Of sins which, for which reason the wrath of God is coming or the fatherly chastisement is coming.

And so every command is pointing out something that's harmful. Not good, John. Not good there. Don't go there. And even the positive commands carry implied warnings of the dangers.

So the positive command of keeping the Lord's day holy, keeping the Sabbath day holy, is warning against the danger of treating that day as a common day. implied in every positive command is a warning against the opposite way.

[40:27] By them is your servant warned. The thing may look innocent, even promise some pleasure, but God's warning you. And you know there's a hook behind that bait.

Got to stay away from there. Looks safe, but it's not. By them is your servant warned. The law of God warns us. Isn't that good of God to give us warnings?

Just let us fall into the pits. Well, he'll learn the hard way. No, he warns us ahead of time. And thirdly, God's law brings great reward. Again, Psalm 19:11, By them is your servant warned.

In keeping them there is a great reward. A great reward. The world, the flesh, and the devil all tell us, don't they, that God's laws will ruin your joy.

They'll keep you back from the greatest joys in life. And David here in Psalm 19 says, you're lying to me because I have followed those ways and in the keeping of them there is a great, a great reward.

[41:33] A great reward. We love rewards, don't we? Cash back rewards. Oh boy, we can't spend enough to get those cash back rewards, can we?

Rewards. On the grade card, we study hard. Rewards. They're good things, aren't they? And that's what David is saying. In the keeping of his command, they're great rewards.

Some of them you get in this life. Some of them you'll cash in for eternity. You talk about great. There are rewards to the man who keeps himself pure now and does not commit adultery with another man's wife.

He's rewarded in his own wife. He's rewarded in his own children. He's rewarded in his own reputation. He's saved a myriad of consequences from going that way.

In the keeping of his commitment, there's great rewards. And what will it be when we sit down with the Lord Jesus in that eternal kingdom and he hands out those rewards?

[42:37] Mine does not even know how to think of that. But he talks about it in the Bible. rewards of grace. Why did you keep that?

Well, the Spirit of God worked in me to will and do of his good pleasure and in the keeping of them there's a great reward. Grace upon grace like the waves of the sea.

As the second generation of Israelites are about to go into the promised land, Moses repeats the Ten Commandments for them. And then he says this to them. Be careful to do what the Lord your God has commanded you.

Do not turn aside to the right or to the left. Walk in the way that the Lord your God has commanded you so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.

The way of obedience is the way of blessing. I'm not saying prosperity and all that will surely be yours. I'm saying you'll be blessed in ways that make riches look like stones.

[43:41] You will be blessed. And in the end you will be blessed with eternal life and all the riches of Christ's kingdom. Great rewards.

Jesus says now you know these things happy are you blessed are you if you keep them. Honor your father and mother children.

Obey your parents. Why? That it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. Ephesians New Covenant Scripture.

Father. God is out to do you good children by giving you that command to honor your father and mother. This is the way kids.

This is the very best way for children to live. Walk in this way and come to know the blessings the rewards of doing it. You don't know kids how much good in your life comes from an attitude that

learns to submit to the authority that God has put over you in the home to obey mom and dad.
[44 : 47] I just heard again this week of a young man who never learned to bow his will to his mom and dad. He's grown up now and he's still not bowing his will to authority to his own ruin.

In the keeping of your law there is a great reward and no small part of that reward is the freedom that God's law gives.

James calls it the law of liberty the law that gives freedom and David says in Psalm 119.32 I run in the path of your commands for you've set my heart free. Where does a heart set free like to run? Right down the straight and narrow hedged in by the commands of God. This is freedom he shouts as he runs through life in the way of God's commands.

And so the rewards that come to those who keep God's laws to be spared from all sorts of bondages and addictions of sin. Jesus says whoever sins is the slave of sin.

[45 : 50] That's bondage that's lack of freedom. But whoever keeps God's law finds himself running in the way of freedom. The sinner says I'm not keeping God's laws and I don't feel any bondage.

You know that's the worst bondage of all isn't it? To be a slave and think you're free. And so we see the man who's a slave to his drink to his alcohol and yet he thinks he's free.

He thinks he can handle his liquor. He's destroying his wife his relationship at home his kids his job and his health and I'm free. I'm not a slave to anything.

That's the worst kind of bondage. And Satan delights to so disguise his bondage that people are walking in it and don't even know it. But oh the laws of God are ways of freedom.

Well there's many others in Psalm 119 I'd encourage you to read eight more verses every day just taking a section this week of Psalm 119 and see why it is that David would pray make me to go in the way of your commands for there my heart finds delight.

[46 : 58] Delight. So the law is good if a person uses it properly. Let's not use a spoon to shovel snow.

Let's not use the law to try to save ourselves. Let's continue to trust alone in Christ law keeping and in his death for law breakers.

But let's also embrace the law that God has given us. Let's count it to be good as God is good.

Revealing his character our sin and the way to live.

And let's thank him for it. Let's love it and him for it and meditate on it and give careful and cheerful obedience to it as it ever leads us and points us to Christ both for pardon and for power.

This is the way to love and serve me Jesus says. This is the way to please and glorify me. Let's sing of that in number 449. The law of God is good and wise and we see some of the goodness of God in his law spelled out for us in this hymn.

[48 : 11] Let's sing it with gratitude to our lawgiver. Stand as we sing 449. Let's pray. Our Father, we bow in your presence and thank you for your goodness, goodness in giving us a law to reveal yourself to us.

It is good for us to know the God with whom we have to do. It's good to know what's going to be on that final test before we show up in judgment. And we thank you as well for that law that showed us our sin and need for a Savior, that screamed at us over and over, you need Christ, you need the only lawgiver and savior for lawbreakers.

Thank you for bringing that law to our hearts with power for many of us. We pray that any who are still making a ladder out of the law would see again this morning and see perhaps for the first time just how futile such efforts are and come and trust in the only Savior.

And then Lord, we would receive from you the law as your guide for life, your rule for us, how it is that we love you and please you and glorify you in these years that you've given us on earth.

Thank you for the many dangers that you've spared us from. Thank you for the many addictions and bondages that I would be in this morning had it not been for your law and your spirit and for the spirit of Jesus to move me to go in careful obedience to your law.

[49 : 45] Forgive me for my disobedience. Thank you for your grace that abounds even where sin abounded. Teach us to love you and to love your law. We ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.